We claim:

1. A method for ensuring sterility in a cleaning system for an instrument, comprising the steps of:

(a) introducing ozone into water from an inlet source to form sterilized water; and

(b) circulating said sterilized water through said cleaning system.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said sterilized water is formed by introducing ozone into water contained by a reservoir in fluid connection with said instrument cleaning system.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said reservoir is pressurized.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said water includes between 0.1 and 15 percent ozone by volume.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said system includes a filter disposed between the water inlet and the instrument cleaning system and said ozone is introduced before said water contacts said filter.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein step (b) is performed periodically during periods in which the system is not in use.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein step (b) is performed after said instrument has been cleaned and sterilized.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said instrument comprises a lumened instrument.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said lumened instrument is cleaned and rinsed in a connector-less chamber such that no cleaning system structure contacts an end of the lumened instrument.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said lumened instrument is pre-treated by injecting a liquid thru an end to determine whether a blockage exists within said lumened instrument.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein, if said blockage exists, a filament is run through said lumened instrument prior to step (a) being performed.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said sterilized water has a bacteria, spore, or fungus content of less than 1 colony forming unit per 100 milliliters.

13. The method of claim 2, wherein said sterilized water is formed by introducing ozone into the water contained by the reservoir occurs in parallel with a wash process that is occurring in said instrument cleaning system such that said sterilized water is ready for use after said wash process is complete.

14. An apparatus for cleaning and sterilizing an instrument, comprising:

a chamber adapted to connectorlessly engage said instrument during cleaning and sterilization, said chamber including a fluid exhaust port,

a pressurized water reservoir in fluid connection with said chamber,

a re-circulating water pump in fluid connection with said water reservoir,

a water source in fluid connection with said water reservoir; and

a means for introducing ozone into said water from the water source.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, further including a filter means disposed between the water source and the pressurized water reservoir.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said ozone is introduced before the water contacts said filter means.

17. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the water source is in fluid connection with both the pressurized water reservoir and the chamber.

18. The apparatus of claim 17, further including one or more filter means disposed between the water source, the pressurized water reservoir, and the chamber.

19. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said chamber is pressurized.

20. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said water includes between 0.1 and 15 percent ozone by volume.

21. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said instrument comprises a lumened instrument.

22. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said means for introducing ozone achieves a greater than log six reduction in any bacteria, spores, or fungi present within said apparatus.